

SECRETARY OF STATE

STATE OF MONTANA

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2006 ELECTION CALENDAR

(all dates 2006 unless otherwise noted; includes deadlines from the Commissioner of Political Practices)

- June 23, 2005 First day sample ballot issue petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election, except for initiative referenda, may be submitted to the Secretary of State (no more than 1 year prior to deadline for filing with election administrator) **13-27-202(3)**
- Sept. 23, 2005 Deadline for submitting initiative referendum petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election to election administrators for certification of signatures; last day for withdrawal of referendum petition signatures (submission no later than 4 weeks before the final date for filing the referendum petitions in Secretary of State's office) **13-27-301**
- Oct. 21, 2005 First day signatures on approved constitutional and statutory initiative petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election may be submitted to election administrators (no sooner than 9 months before final date of filing with the Secretary of State's office) **13-27-301**
- Deadline for filing complete initiative referendum petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election in Secretary of State's office by county election administrator (filed no later than six months after adjournment of the legislature which passed the act) **Article III Section 5 Montana Constitution**
- Jan. 23 First day for candidates to file declarations for nomination with Secretary of State or election administrator, as applicable (no sooner than 135 days before election) **13-10-201(6)**
- Feb. 24 Last day for precinct boundary changes to be made, if needed or desired (no later than 100 days before primary). Election administrator certifies changes and submits map to Secretary of State **13-3-102(1), 13-1-204(2)**
- March 16 Petition to form a new political party due at election administrators (one week before filing deadline) **13-10-601**
- March 23 5:00 p.m. Last day for candidates to file declarations with Secretary of State or election administrator, as applicable (no later than 75 days before election) **13-10-201(6)**
- Last day for candidates to withdraw from the Primary election (no later than 75 days before a primary election) **13-10-325**
- Beginning of period for making application for absentee ballot (75 days before election). United States electors, defined in Title 13, Chapter 21, MCA, are not subject to an earliest date to request an absentee ballot. **13-13-211, 13-21-210**
- NEW.** Electors on the permanent absentee list must be sent a permanent absentee elector confirmation form no later than this date. **13-13-212(4)(b)**

Election administrator determines if nonpartisan primary for a political subdivision needs to be held
13-14-115

Last day for election administrators to file petitions with Secretary of State to create a new political party (at least 75 days before the date of the primary) **13-10-601**

March 23 through March 30

Period for each election administrator to certify to the Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all *Statewide and State District candidates* in their county who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37. (Use certification form letters provided by the Commissioner's office.) **13-37-126(3)**

March 23 through March 31

Period for Secretary of State to certify names and designation of candidates to election administrators (not more than 75 days or less than 67 days before the election) **13-10-208(1)**

March 23 through April 4

Period for each election administrator to certify to the Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all *County candidates* in their county who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37. (Use certification form letters provided by the Commissioner's office.) **13-37-126(3)**

March 31 Last day for the Commissioner of Political Practices to notify the Secretary of State of the names of all *Statewide and State District candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37 by properly filing all required statements/reports with the Commissioner of Political Practices and their county election administrator. **13-37-126(3)**

March 31 through April 5

Period for election administrator to certify names and designation of candidates and have the official ballots prepared (not more than 67 or less than 62 days before the election) **13-10-208(2), 13-10-209**

NEW. An election administrator does not need to prepare a primary ballot for a political party if the party does not have candidates for more than half of the offices to appear on the ballot; **or** no more than one candidate files for nomination by that party for any of the offices to appear on the ballot. **13-10-209(2)**

April 3 Last day governing body may, by resolution, determine that a nonpartisan primary election must be held, if election administrator determines election will not be held (not more than 10 days after the close of filing by candidates) **13-14-115**

Election administrator completes register of candidates book, if used **13-10-205, 13-14-114**

April 5 Last day for the Commissioner of Political Practices to certify to election administrators for their ballots the names of *County candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37. **13-37-126(3)**

Each week starting not earlier than April 10

NEW. Notice of close of registration is published on radio or television, or in a newspaper three times in the 4 weeks before preceding the close of registration. The notice provisions are fulfilled upon the third publication. **13-2-301**

April 21 List of qualified electors submitted by county central committee (of the political parties eligible to nominate candidates in the primary) for appointment as election judges (at least 45 days prior to primary election) **13-4-101, 13-4-102**

May 5 Polling place for each precinct must be designated **13-3-105(1)**

Governing body appoints election judges **13-4-101**

May 8 Voter registration for primary election closes (30 days before election) **13-2-301**

NEW. Direct recording electronic voting systems must be tested and certified (30 days prior to the election). **13-17-212**

Date primary election absentee ballots must be prepared and available (30 days prior to election) **13-13-205**

NEW. Electors on the permanent absentee list must be sent ballots automatically, as long as they have completed, signed, and returned a permanent absentee elector confirmation form sent to them by the county election administrator at least 75 days before the election. **13-13-212(4)**

Immediately after close of registration

List of registered electors is prepared **13-1-204, 13-2-115**

May 22 5 p.m. Deadline for write-in candidates to file a declaration of intent (no later than 15 days before election). Write-in candidates must pay the filing fee at the time of filing. **13-10-211(1), (6)**

NEW. As long as an election is held and a write-in candidate is qualified for and seeks the office for which the candidate is written-in, a write-in candidate running for an office for which no candidate has filed does not have to file a declaration in order for the candidate's write-in votes to be counted. **13-10-211(7)**

Before election

Election judges are instructed by election administrators **13-4-203**

May 26 Nomination petitions from independent and minor party candidates must be submitted to election administrators for verification of signatures **13-10-503**

May 27 through June 3

Election administrator publishes diagram with voting system and ballot arrangement, statement of places systems exhibited, voting instructions (not more than 10 or less than 3 days before election) **13-17-203**

May 27 through June 4

Statement of location of precinct polling places is published (not more than 10 days or less than 2 days before election) **13-3-105(2)**

June 2 5 p.m. -- beginning of period to apply for a **special** absentee ballot by persons unable to go to the polls as a result of an illness or health emergency **13-13-211(2)**

June 5 Noon -- last day and time for application to be made for absentee ballot **13-13-211(1)**

Noon -- last day and time for voter registration by those United States electors, defined in Title 13, Chapter 21, MCA, returning to the elector's U.S. residence too late to register by May 8 deadline **13-21-203**

Deadline for verified nomination petitions from independent candidates for partisan elections to be filed with the Secretary of State or election administrator, as applicable **13-10-503(2)**

June 6 **PRIMARY NOMINATING ELECTION 13-1-107(1)**

NEW. Direct recording electronic voting systems must be tested and certified (on election day) **13-17-212**

Noon -- last day and time to apply for a **special** absentee ballot by persons unable to go to the polls as a result of an illness or health emergency **13-13-211(2), 13-13-201**

June 7 through August 16

Period for each election administrator to certify to the Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all *nominated Statewide and State District and County candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37 by properly filing all required statements/reports with their county election administrator. (Use certification form letters provided by the Commissioner's office.) **13-37-126(3)**

- June 12 3:00 p.m. – Counting of provisional ballots, for which proof of registration or valid identification is received by mail after 5:00 p.m. the day after election day, may not begin prior to this date and time (proof of registration or identification must be postmarked by election day or the day after election day, and must be verified by 3:00 p.m. on this date, in order to be counted.) **13-15-107, See Pending Rules**
- NEW.** 3:00 p.m. – Date and time for ballots that were sent by United States electors by 8 p.m. on election day to be received by the county election administrator. **13-21-206**

By June 13

County canvass completed (within 3 to 7 days after primary election) **13-15-401**

Within five days of official canvass (either county or state canvass, as applicable)

Deadline for candidates to initiate contest of primary election (5 days or less after a candidate has been certified as nominated) **13-36-102(1)**

Deadline for unsuccessful primary candidate to apply for a recount (within 5 days after the canvass) **13-16-301**

Election administrators complete county register of nominations book, if used **13-10-205, 13-14-114, Directive**

Election administrators send certified canvass results to Secretary of State **13-15-501, Directive**

- June 23 Deadline for submitting constitutional and statutory initiative petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election to election administrator for certification of signatures; last day for withdrawal of signatures (no later than 4 weeks before filing deadline with the Secretary of State) **13-27-301**

By June 26 State canvass complete (within 20 days after election or sooner if the returns are all received) **13-15-502**

Within 10 days of official canvass (either county or state canvass as applicable)

Deadline for write-in nominee to file a written declaration of acceptance (must also comply with the provisions of 13-37-126, MCA, have paid the filing fee at the time of filing, and have received at least 5% of the total vote cast for the successful candidate for the same office at the last general election) **13-10-204, 13-10-211(6)**

- July 18 Deadline for appointment of committee members by designated individuals for ballot issues (no later than 1 week prior to deadline for filing committee arguments) **13-27-403**
- July 20 Secretary of State begins process for printing voter information pamphlet for 2006 GENERAL election (at least 110 days before the election) **13-27-410**
- July 21 Deadline for filing complete constitutional and statutory initiative petitions for the 2006 GENERAL election in Secretary of State's office by county election administrator (third Friday of the fourth month before election) **13-27-104**
- July 25 Committee arguments due to Secretary of State (no later than 105 days before election) **13-27-406**
- Deadline for appointments by ballot issue committee members to fill vacancies (up until the deadline for filing arguments) **13-27-403**
- Notify ballot issue committee members of deadlines (within 5 business days of appointment) **13-27-403**
- August 4 Rebuttal arguments due to the Secretary of State (no later than 10 days after the deadline for filing the original arguments) **13-27-407**
- August 10 Last day for election administrators to request abbreviated form of ballot for ballot issues (at least 14 days before Secretary of State certifies ballot) **13-27-501(4)**

- August 14 Last day for candidates to withdraw from general election (no later than 85 days before a general election) **13-10-325**
- August 17 Last day for the Commissioner of Political Practices to notify the Secretary of State of the names of *nominated Statewide and State District candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 25 and 37. **13-37-126(3)**
- August 24 Beginning of period for making application for absentee ballot (75 days before election). United States electors, defined in Title 13, Chapter 21, MCA, are not subject to an earliest date to request an absentee ballot. **13-13-211, 13-21-210**
- NEW.** Electors on the permanent absentee list must be sent a permanent absentee elector confirmation form no later than this date. **13-13-212(4)(b)**
- Last day for Secretary of State to certify names of candidates and ballot issues to election administrators (75 days or more before election) **13-12-201**
- Recommended deadline for election administrators to certify names of candidates and ballot issues **13-12-201, Directive**

Starting no later than September 12

- NEW.** Notice of close of registration is published on radio or television, or in a newspaper three times in the 4 weeks before preceding the close of registration. The notice provisions are fulfilled upon the third publication. **13-2-301**
- Sept. 22 **NEW.** Federal general election absentee ballots must be prepared and available (45 days prior to election) **13-13-205(1)(a)**
- NEW.** Electors on the permanent absentee list must be sent ballots automatically, as long as they have completed, signed, and returned a permanent absentee elector confirmation form sent to them by the county election administrator at least 75 days before the election. **13-13-212(4)**
- Last day for printer to deliver voter information pamphlets to counties (not later than 45 days before the election. **13-27-410(3)**
- October 10 Voter registration for general election closes (30 days before election) **13-2-301**
- NEW.** Beginning of late registration. An elector may register or change the elector's voter registration information after the close of regular registration in 13-2-301 and vote in the election if the election administrator in the county where the elector resides receives and verifies the elector's voter registration information prior to the close of the polls on election day. A late registrant must vote in the county election administrator's office. Electors who have already been sent an absentee ballot are not eligible for late registration. Their registrations are accepted for the next election. **Section 1, Senate Bill 302.**
- NEW.** Direct recording electronic voting systems must be tested and certified (30 days prior to the election) **13-17-212**
- Last day for election administrators to mail voter information pamphlet (30 days before election) **13-27-410(4)**

Immediately after close of registration

- List of registered electors is prepared **13-1-204, 13-2-115**
- October 23 5 p.m. Deadline for write-in candidates to file a declaration of intent (no later than 15 days before election). Write-in candidates must pay the filing fee at the time of filing. **13-10-211(1), (6)**
- NEW.** As long as an election is held and a write-in candidate is qualified for and seeks the office for which the candidate is written-in, a write-in candidate running for an office for which no candidate has filed does not have to file a declaration in order for the candidate's write-in votes to be counted. **13-10-211(7)**

October 28 through November 4

Election administrator publishes diagram with voting system and ballot arrangement, statement of places systems exhibited, voting instructions (not more than 10 or less than 3 days before election) **13-17-203**

October 28 through November 5

Statement of location of precinct polling places is published (not more than 10 days or less than 2 days before election) **13-3-105(2)**

November 3 5 p.m. -- beginning of period to apply for a special absentee ballot by persons unable to go to the polls as a result of an illness or health emergency **13-13-211(2), 13-13-201**

November 6 Noon -- last day and time for application to be made for absentee ballot **13-13-211(1)**

Noon -- last day and time for voter registration by those United States electors, defined in Title 13, Chapter 21, MCA, returning to the elector's U.S. residence too late to register by October 4 deadline **13-21-203**

November 7 **GENERAL ELECTION 13-1-104(1)**

NEW. Direct recording electronic voting systems must be tested and certified (on election day) **13-17-212**

Noon -- last day and time to apply for a **special** absentee ballot by persons unable to go to the polls as a result of an illness or health emergency **13-13-211(2), 13-13-201**

NEW. 8:00 p.m. -- End of late registration. An elector may register or change the elector's voter registration information after the close of regular registration in 13-2-301 and vote in the election if the election administrator in the county where the elector resides receives and verifies the elector's voter registration information prior to the close of the polls on election day. A late registrant must vote in the county election administrator's office. Electors who have already been sent an absentee ballot are not eligible for late registration. Their registrations are accepted for the next election. **Section 1, Senate Bill 302**

November 8 through December 15

Period for election administrator to certify to the Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all *elected Statewide and State District candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37 by properly filing all required statements/reports with their county election administrator. (Use certification form letters provided by the Commissioner's office.) **13-37-127**

Period for the Commissioner of Political Practices to notify the Secretary of State of the names of all *elected Statewide and State District candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37. **13-37-127**

Period for election administrators to certify to the Commissioner of Political Practices the names of all *elected County candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37. (Use certification form letters provided by the Commissioner's office.) **13-37-127**

Period for the Commissioner of Political Practices to certify to election administrators the names of all *elected County candidates* who have complied with MCA Title 13, chapters 35 and 37 so certificates of election can be issued. **13-37-127**

November 13 3:00 p.m. – Counting of provisional ballots, for which proof of registration or valid identification is received by mail after 5:00 p.m. the day after election day, may not begin prior to this date and time (proof of registration or valid identification must be postmarked by election day or the day after election day, and must be verified by 3:00 p.m. on this date, in order to be counted.) **13-15-107**

NEW. 3:00 p.m. – Date and time for ballots that were sent by United States electors by 8 p.m. on election day to be received by the county election administrator. **13-21-206**

By November 14

County canvass complete (within 3 to 7 days after general election) **13-15-401**

Within five days of official canvass (either county or state canvass, as applicable)

Deadline for unsuccessful general election candidate to apply for a recount (within 5 days after the canvass) **13-16-301**

Election administrators to send canvass results to Secretary of State by certified mail **13-15-501, Directive**

By November 24

Returns by election administrator to Secretary of State (3 days before state canvass) **13-15-503**

By November 27

State canvass complete (within 20 days after election or sooner if the returns are all received) **13-15-502**

Within 10 days of official canvass (either county or state canvass, as applicable)

Deadline for successful write-in candidate to file a written declaration of acceptance (must also comply with the provisions of 13-37-225, MCA, and have paid the filing fee at the time of filing) **13-15-111, 13-10-211(6)**

General information

1. Filing for Office: Section 13-10-201, Montana Code Annotated (MCA): In a partisan election, an elector may not file a declaration for more than one party. A candidate may not file for more than one office.
2. Filing fees: All declared write-in candidates must pay applicable filing fee at the time of filing.
3. Polls open: Section 13-1-106, MCA: Polls must open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., except that polling places having fewer than 200 registered electors must be open from noon to 8 p.m. (or until all registered electors in any precinct have voted).
4. Candidates: Information for filing reports of **campaign contributions and expenditures** will be provided by the Commissioner of Political Practices.
5. Voters: County Election Administrator or the Secretary of State at 1-888-884-8683 (VOTE).